





LECTURE

BY

O. V. MORGAN, M.P.

BEFORE THE

MONTREAL BRANCH

OF THE

IMPERIAL

FEDERATION LEAGUE

IN CANADA,

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Imperial Federation.

LECTURE BY O. V. MORGAN, ESQ., M.P.

OF BATTERSEA, ENGLAND.

Before Montreal Branch of the League, on Monday, October 24th, 1887,

AND DISCUSSION THEREON.

MR. O. V. MORGAN, M.P., Battersea, London, lectured in the Natural History Society's rooms, before the members of the Imperial Federation League. The subject, "Imperial Federation," was treated by the lecturer in a masterly style, and his views on the question, cloaked in eloquent language, were broad and patriotic. Mr. Henry Lyman presided, and a large number of members were present, among whom were Messrs. George Hague, A. Robertson, A. McGoun, jr., secretary, E. Judge, Prof. Johnson, D. R. McCord, G. B. Burland, Hugh McLennan, J. S. Stevenson, J. M. Browning, J. B. McLea, S. C. Stevenson, and a large number of other members.

The Chairman introduced the lecturer, after reading a letter from Sir Donald A. Smith, M.P., regretting that he could not attend.

MR. MORGAN'S address was as follows:—

Eleven years have passed away since my last visit to Montreal, and it so happens that between my visit of 1876 and my first visit, eleven years also intervened. The progress of Montreal between 1865 and 1876 was very marked; but the progress between 1876 and 1887 is far greater: it is indeed quite remarkable. New streets with magnificent residences have sprung up; new warehouses and handsome retail establishments abound; a new hotel second to none on this or any other continent offers its hospitality to visitors. If anything were needed to convince people of the commercial solidity of your City, it should be necessary only to refer to your Banks, the greatest of which is—in importance—I believe, the third in the whole world:—the Bank of England, the Bank of France and the Bank of Montreal, being the three greatest. That Montreal will continue to flourish, all must desire. For my part, I see no reason why the City should not, in the future, progress even more rapidly than in the past. In that excellent New York paper, the *Evening Post*, I have read under “Canada’s Prosperity,” that the Trade of the Dominion is larger then ever before.

Since my arrival in Montreal, I have visited the City Hall, being anxious to make myself acquainted with the difference between your municipal government and that of London. In some respects I find your system superior to that of the Capital of the British Empire.

But I must not forget that we are here to-night to talk over “Imperial Federation,” and I am aware that several gentlemen in this hall are prepared to speak on that most important subject: a subject to my mind of the very greatest importance and which in all parts of the Empire is stirring the hearts of our fellow citizens: not only in the West, but in the East and in the South.

The Exhibition which was held in London last year afforded evidence of the importance of the Colonies and

India to the United Kingdom, and of the Mother Country to the Colonies, and brought home to all of us the stupendous proportions of the British Empire. In the early days of the exhibition, a gentleman, who was aware that I had visited all the colonies and dependencies, asked me what I considered to be the most striking and most beautiful objects at South Kensington. Although I had not really considered the subject, I answered.—“The most beautiful is the Durbar Hall, in the Indian Court. The most striking is the huge map, by Johnston, on the wall outside the Queensland exhibition.” My friend agreed as to the beauty of the Durbar Hall, but as to the map he expressed no opinion, for as he observed, he had not noticed it. The map, which so deeply impressed me, showed, in red, the various territories throughout the world, which together form the British Empire. The map on a small scale may be found in a pamphlet entitled “Fifty Years Progress,” published by the Imperial Federation League in London, and I expect our friend Mr. McGoun has a few copies of the paper by him. From this map we learn that, one-fifth of the globe is under British rule, and we also learn that the little mother country comprises only one-seventeenth of this fifth of the world. Rome when in the zenith of her power, possessed only 2,300,000 square miles. Whereas the British Empire can boast of 9,127,000 square miles. The population of the United Kingdom, which, in 1837 reached 26,000,000, numbers in the present year 37,000,000, showing an increase since the accession to the throne, by our beloved Queen, of 41 per cent. As to your great Dominion of Canada, it would not be fair to weary you with figures already familiar. You may well be proud of your share of the “Fifty Years Progress,” and of the remarkable enterprise of your people in building that great line of railway, which enables us to take our tours round

the world on British territory, and on British ships. Remarkable is the growth of Australasia, that portion of the Southern hemisphere whose population at the death of William IV, was limited to 184,000, and is now peopled by 8,500,000 happy, prosperous human beings. Let us hope that the day is not far distant when steamers in connection with the Canadian Pacific Railway will run to Australia as they do now to Japan and China.

The remarkable progress of our Empire is due to the energy and enterprise of the British race, aided in no small degree by modern science and in particular by the invention of steam power.

I will not trouble you with details of the population of the other colonies and dependencies, but it may be well to note that our total numbers, which, on the accession of the Queen amounted to 126,000,000, are now upwards of 300,000,000, counting in the latter the 50,000,000 in the native States of India. Not to weary you with figures, I will only add that in the last 50 years, exports from Great Britain to the Colonies and India, have grown from £15,000,000 to £80,000,000, while the imports have jumped up from £18,000,000 to £88,000,000. The revenue of the United Kingdom in the same time has crept from £55,000,000 to £93,000,000, and the revenues of the various Colonies and India, which in 1837 were £37,000,000, are now £115,000,000. Never in the history of the world has there existed under one Government such a variety of climate, soil, and race; never were the bounties of nature conferred in such profusion upon any people; never was there such scope given to their industry and intelligence. The day has happily passed when an English statesman can be named who is in favour of separating the colonies from the Mother Country; but it is not more than 20 years since there were such people, and they were not confined to one party. Only in June last year

Sir Henry Barkly, who has filled the position of Governor in several of our most important colonies stated :—

“Thirty years ago, when I was about to start for Victoria, officials of high standing in Downing street made no secret of their expectation that I should probably prove the last Imperial Governor of that colony. No one now thinks Sir Henry Loch is likely to be so.”

Sir Henry Loch, I may say, is the present Governor of Victoria. No ; instead of separation, the desire exists, not only in the Colonies, but also at home, among the majority of well informed and travelled men, to bring our kinsmen beyond the seas into closer and more intimate relations with the mother country. A belief is growing that unless we come closer together we may separate. On this point I may, perhaps, be permitted to quote some lines from my address, issued in 1885, when I was first a parliamentary candidate for Battersea :—

“My feeling of devotion to the Colonies which have been visited by me, is in no degree less than towards to the Mother Country. I watch with intense interest the growth and prosperity of Greater Britain, and look forward hopefully to the day when Imperial Federation shall be a reality. Unless the United Kingdom, the Colonies, and our dependencies unite, a time may come when this great Empire will break to pieces. Imperial Federation may possibly be followed by the Union of the British Empire and the United States. If ever the two Anglo-Saxon nations re-unite, it will be a happy day, not only for the English-speaking people throughout the world, but also for all oppressed nationalities. Those who think their circumstances may be improved by emigration, should be encouraged and assisted to make their new homes in the Greater Britain beyond the seas.”

In what way the closer relationship shall be brought about is a matter for discussion and consideration. The

subject is rapidly ripening. Imperial Federation has become one of the leading questions of the day, and was referred to in the Queen's speech in August 1886. In 1884, the Imperial Federation League was formed with the object of securing, by federation, the permanent unity of the Empire. As some may not have studied the subject very closely, I will quote from a pamphlet already referred to, and entitled "50 Years' Progress," answering to the following questions—"What do we want? Why do we want it?"

"What do we want?" Let us look at the materials with which we have to deal, and the question answers itself. At this moment, there are throughout the world more than fifty million men, women and children speaking the English language, possessing and proud of the traditions of English history, reading the same books, pursuing the same ideas, acknowledging the same law. In another half century this fifty million will have grown to a hundred million. It may be a matter of regret—some of our friends would have us think so—but it is, nevertheless, a fact, as certain as the process of the sun, that the future of the world is with the English-speaking people. The time is within measurable distance. The thing is certain, inevitable. One great division of the English-speaking world has already framed a wise and well considered scheme of union among its parts. It has learnt the value of that union, it has fought to maintain it, and has now placed it beyond the reach of danger. We who belong to the other portion, not less intimately connected by interest, far more closely bound together by the ties of kindred race, desire in like manner to obtain a practical organization, by which the whole commonwealth may work together with its united resources for the attainment of its common ends.

"This is what we want. Next comes the question,

Why do we want it? We want it, in the first place, on account of the benefits which it will confer. And, in the second place, on account of the evils which it will enable us to avoid.

"The whole underlying principle of modern political thought is that which assumes the practical identity of human interests, and which only seeks for the best way in which the resources of every class and every locality may be best utilised for the mutual advantage of every other class and locality. There is not a man throughout the empire, whether he works with his head or his hands, who does not know perfectly well the value of system and organization in his trade and calling. The statesman knows it, the lawyer knows it, the commercial man, the medical man, the tradesman, the artizan, and the labourer, are all aware of it, and are all endeavouring, in one way or another, to give effect to their knowledge. We, therefore, desire federation because we believe that thereby we can best secure the fullest development of the moral and material resources of the great undivided community of English-speaking people to which we belong.

"For one other great end we also desire it. We live in a world in which passion and prejudice are not extinct. We know as a matter of fact, that between communities which have no means of adjusting their differences save by diplomatic negotiations, never undertaken till the cause of difference has become acute, and always conducted under the pressure of popular feeling, war is a possibility and, alas, history tells us, a probability. As the result of misunderstanding and want of proper organism, two members of the English-speaking family may, any day, become at war with each other. If so it is possible that, when that war ends, they may become friends again, allies again, but one people never again.

"We desire Imperial Federation, therefore, because

through it we see a certainty of Peace, and the avoidance of the possibility of War."

It may be generally stated that the Colonists know England better than she knows the Colonies. Greater Britain has no less interest in foreign affairs than has Great Britain, but the former has no direct voice in their management. The Fisheries Question in North America concerns Canada greatly. The possession of New Guinea by Germany, and the New Hebrides by France, concerns our Australian fellow-subjects much more than the dwellers in the old country. What is it that so frequently disturbs our relations with Russia? It is India. If India were not a part of our Empire there would be no chance of a quarrel between Russia and England. Why are we in Egypt? It has never been asserted that we went there for exclusively British interests, not forgetting its importance as the route for our troops to and from the East. India sends its produce to Europe by the Suez Canal, and England sends its manufactures to India by the same route. Australia and New Zealand, year by year, make greater use of the Canal. Our distant possessions are interested in the freedom of this great water way, which is not of less importance to them than to us. Why, then, should we exercise the sole control, and undertake the entire responsibility of the whole British Empire? By the end of this century it is a question whether the people of English blood will be more numerous in Great Britain or in the Greater Britain beyond the seas. The true principle of Imperial Federation is "Family life." The children arrive at maturity and then share with their parents the joys, pleasure, and responsibilities of manhood. We are neither wiser nor better than our brothers in Australia or Canada; and, therefore, if the political connection is to continue, our relations must develop the principle of co-operation and equal rights, and tend to-

wards political equality of determinating foreign policy and declaring the duties of common defence. In 1885, at a meeting of the Montreal Branch of the Imperial Federation League, a resolution was proposed, seconded, and carried, to the following effect:—

“ That this meeting hails with satisfaction the formation in England of the Imperial Federation League, having for its object the maintenance of the permanent unity of the Empire.”

Mr. Alex. McNeill, a member of your Parliament, in seconding the resolution, used the following words:—

“ He had for many years hoped to see this day, and it was the fulfilment of a deep seated wish in his heart. (Hear, hear). The League in London had been started by eminent practical statesmen, Liberals and Conservatives alike, several of whom he named.”

At about the same time a meeting took place in Melbourne, at which Doctor Moorhouse, then Bishop of Melbourne, took part. Dr. Moorhouse has since been transferred to the Bishopric of Manchester. The Bishop spoke thus at Melbourne:—

“ Which is the fittest race to occupy the vacant spaces of the world? Are we to say, whatever race it is, it is not the British; that it is best for us that we fall out of the rank of the leading and ruling people, that we suppress our instinct of empire, and make ourselves as comfortable as we can, each in his little corner, until we are swallowed up by the deluge of the coming fight? Are we to say that we feel our strength waning with every year, or are we to say that we look upon the history of the mother of human freedom as the discipline of the British races for high service to mankind? Do you British men feel yourselves worn out and your work done?—(no, no)—that you are members of an effeminate and emasculated race—that cannot lead the great race—files

of humanity as they are marching on to freedom and happiness? No! do you feel that? The man that says that knows nothing of the British people, and he is no true British man himself. (Cheers). My friends, we are a great people, born to lead, born to teach, and to guide, and to bless, and therefore, because when we go into a country, we try to establish institutions that are encouraging and conservative of freedom and civilisation, we are the fittest race to fill the vacant spaces of the world, and consequently are the fittest to help, to protect, and to guide the backward races of mankind." (Cheers).

It will be said by some that the distance creates a difficulty. This I do not admit. For all practical purposes of government the British Empire is in a better position to communicate with its different parts than were the United States when they established their independence, a hundred years ago. Steam brings the most remote portions of the Empire within a journey of only thirty days, while Electricity has brought Ottawa, Montreal, Sydney, Melbourne, Calcutta and Bombay into more immediate communication than was possible between London and Edinburgh a few years since.

The Colonial Conference which met in London this spring was largely due to the action of the Imperial Federation League. At the conference there met, for the first time in our history, representatives from all sections of the Empire. Canada shook hands and met in friendly intercourse Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the other colonies and dependencies. A general and better understanding of the wants and wishes of the different colonies has been brought about, some matters have been settled, other matters have been discussed and are in consequence nearer a settlement. The representatives of the British Empire have discovered how much better mode of procedure is a friendly conversation than a lengthy cor-

respondence ; the one leads, to practical and satisfactory results, the other sometimes leaves behind it unsettled sores, because the parties have not sufficiently understood the views of one another. That further similar conferences will be held and not at any distant date, I entertain no doubt. The article in *Fifty Years Progress* continues :

“ We have spoken of what we hope for, and have given a reason for the hope that is in us ; and now, lastly, we come to the question, How do we mean to get it ? ”

My own view, I speak only for myself, is the establishment of an Imperial Parliament, consisting of members from the Mother Country and the Colonies, which shall deal exclusively with Imperial subjects, such as Foreign and Colonial affairs, army and navy, ocean postal service, &c. Of these matters I would relieve the present English Parliament, in which, I am happy to admit, there are many members with a practical knowledge of Imperial affairs ; but there are also many members, and excellent members too, who have little or no knowledge of the Colonies and foreign countries..

The objection on the part of some colonists that they would be outnumbered in such a parliament, seems to be satisfactorily answered by pointing out that foreign affairs are already managed without their being directly represented at all ; and that even at the beginning their representation would be real and effective, and would be based upon the principle of increasing with their population and national importance, so that in a short time it would have a commanding influence on the counsels of the Imperial authorities.

Many ways have been suggested of raising funds for purely Imperial purposes. The mode so far most generally approved would appear to be by the imposition of a small discriminating duty on foreign imports from which products of the Empire would be exempt. It is considered

that this would have the double advantage of raising Imperial revenue and of promoting commercial intercourse between the different portions of the Empire.

An Imperial Parliament also means the establishment, wherever they do not already exist, of local assemblies for the conduct of local affairs.

From my experience in the House of Commons, I have become convinced that matters of local government can be more satisfactorily solved—say in Edinburgh and Dublin, than in the British metropolis.

We are the possessors of a proud heritage. Do not let us by want of wisdom and foresight lose that heritage. Do not let the possibility arise for our sons and daughters to be able to say that their parents inherited a great Empire, and, through narrow-minded ignorance and selfishness, allowed it to slip out of their hands.

The hon. gentleman resumed his seat amid loud applause.

EDGAR JUDGE, President of the Young Men's Liberal Club, moved a vote of thanks to the lecturer. As an Englishman, a colonist, and a member of the Empire, he was interested in any proposal to unite its parts together. He was sorry the membership of the League was not larger, but was glad that interest in the subject was growing. If Federation comes, it means increased responsibilities for the Colonies, and therefore the leaders should show how they were to be benefited. England is a large consumer of goods the Colonists produce. Mr. Morgan has pointed out that these might be admitted into English markets on more favourable terms than foreign produce. That is the position we should take up. Some of us, through pure loyalty, would consent to increased responsibilities, but if we could show the Colonists their interests were bound up with it, it would go far to achieving the object we aim at. (Applause.)

ANDREW ROBERTSON, Chairman of the Board of Harbour Commissioners, seconded the resolution. He was glad something practical was suggested. He had repeatedly told friends in London that unless some advantage was to be given the Colonies, there could be no federation. That proposal in Mr. Morgan's paper met with his support and approval. (Applause.)

THE CHAIRMAN, in presenting thanks, said Mr. Morgan had travelled the world over, and his opinions were those of a man who knew his subject. And when we learn that he has long held the views he does, we can commend his judgment and foresight.

The motion was carried with loud applause

MR. MORGAN, in acknowledging the vote, said the question was interesting to the younger men in England, and he was convinced it would soon be brought to the front. The only way out of the difficult situation they were now in, seemed to be the adoption of a federal system. And it would benefit the Old Country to have local government. He had once voted for a turnpike road that was to be constructed in Orkney, and the only man he had ever met that knew anything of that road was Sir Donald Smith, a native of Orkney and a resident in Montreal. (Laughter and applause.)

MR. HUGH MCLENNAN, a Director of the Bank of Montreal, said Mr. Morgan had struck the keynote when he said that while the defence of the Empire must be attended to, he saw the necessity for modifying the trade relations within the Empire. When that note is sounded from Great Britain, it will find a response here. And he believed the time for internal arrangements of that kind were nearer than we supposed. Ten or twelve years ago a question as to the advisability of maintaining the free trade policy towards protective foreign nations was asked in the House of Commons, and the answer of the Govern-

ment was that the hon. member should ask if the multiplication table was correct. But now it is the free-traders who are silent; the other side have a good deal to say. The people of Canada are not overburdened with money, but are rich in energy, industry and labour. An old neighbour of his came to this country about 1816, which was a severe year, landed and went into the forest where he and his boys made a clearing. But having no seed, two of the young men travelled a long distance to a man who had oats. They found another man there also desiring to buy seed. The old settler asked the young men if they could pay for it. They said, "We have no money, but will work for you." He then turned to the other applicant and said, "You have money, you can go and buy elsewhere. These boys have none, and I am going to let them have the oats." This is the spirit of the national policy here. What the people here want is an impetus to their labour and industry. The Empire has great facilities. If the mother country says, We will exchange and interchange with those who are helping to build up our Empire, something can be done. We have lands to be occupied by the surplus of the old Country, and she can receive the produce of our toil. When that is recognised, the Colonies will give a hearty response, and there is no hall in Montreal that would hold the meeting that would then take place in favour of Imperial Federation. (Loud applause.)

MR. GEORGE HAGUE, General Manager of the Merchant's Bank of Canada, said we should hold fast by the great mother country. The difficulty of our position lies in the fact that we have to maintain a separate nationality in the face of a great and powerful republic, speaking the same language and coming from the same stock as ourselves. We are as democratic a country as they. Lord Dufferin told the people of Chicago one time that we could not think of annexation because we were a demo-

cratic people and did not want to surrender a system which made the ministers responsible to the people. (Laughter and cheers.) But we feel constantly the magnetism of that large country, and it is by a constant effort of resistance that we prevent our absorption. We are ready to adopt trade relations of a reasonable character, but not to agree to a commercial union which in his opinion was simply annexation. It is by resisting this magnetism of a people ten times our number that we can maintain our British connexion and establish a monarchical republic under allegiance to the British crown. In time we shall solve the problem of uniting all the Colonies and the old Country together in a federation. Such monuments have small beginnings, but they interest public opinion, and finally some statesman, gifted with foresight, will find the means of giving form to public opinion. In the meantime we shall hold on to the old flag. (Applause.)

MR. D. R. McCORD, Advocate, thought federation was possible only by means of reciprocal trade relations.

THE CHAIRMAN said that since commercial union had been spoken of, he might say that Mr. Wiman, a celebrated man in his way, had taken up the question for the benefit of Canada and not for his own benefit or that of the United States. (Laughter.) He had visited Canada and expended a good deal of time and money and telegraphic energy (laughter), a case in point being an assembly of nine persons in Belleville, which looked very big when Mr. Wiman sent it through the press. (Laughter.) Canada was very like Naboth's vineyard to the United States, they were anxious to have it by any pretence. This branch of the league had issued a pamphlet by their secretary, Mr. McGoun, on the question, which would convince those who read it that commercial union was not a scheme beneficial to Canada. (Hear, hear.)

MR. A. P. McDONALD made an eloquent speech on our

advantages as a British colony, in the course of which he asked what additional advantage we could get from making any change.

MR. MORGAN replying to this, said that it was like the position of affairs in a family when sons had grown up. It was the custom of fathers to take their eldest sons into partnership and confidence. Canada is an elder son, and he thought it would be an advantage if Canada had a part in managing Imperial affairs. It would be the greatest blow he could receive if Canada should declare her desire to secede from the Empire, and the course England in such a case would take would be to talk the question over with her, though he did not believe England would ever use force to keep a colony in the Empire. But he was glad to believe Canada had no such desire. (Hear, hear.)

On motion of Mr. Ansell, a vote of thanks was passed to the Chairman.

The meeting then closed.



